

Stem Cell Agency Hires New Vice President of Medical Affairs & Policy

Posted: March 7, 2022

Oakland, CA – Sean Turbeville PhD. is joining the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) as the Vice President of Medical Affairs and Policy.

Dr. Turbeville has almost 20 years of experience in Medical Affairs, creating strategies and teams for biopharma and digital healthcare companies. He has experience supporting the development of therapies in cancer, neurology, metabolic and genetic disorders and in working with Regulatory Authorities such as the FDA, EMA and others.

Sean has a PhD in Epidemiology from the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center where he later taught courses as an Adjunct Associate Professor. He is the owner of two global regulatory resources for biopharma, "The Global Regulatory Framework for Medical Information in the Pharmaceutical Industry" and "The Global Guide to Compassionate Use Programs". Before joining CIRM, Dr. Turbeville was the President of Matanzas Group, a Medical Affairs consultancy providing a range of Medical Affairs services to over 20 small, growing biopharmaceutical companies.

CIRM's Vice Chair, Sen. (ret) Art Torres says Dr. Turbeville is a great addition to the team: "Sean's expertise will be invaluable to our working group and to our coordination with the Governor and Legislature on affordability and accessibility issues affecting patients."

"I am honored to work at CIRM, where science, business, regulatory and policy work together to accelerate world class science and provide Californians equal accessibility to novel therapies," says Dr. Turbeville. "It's a unique opportunity to give back to the state that has given me and my family so much."

The VP of Medical Affairs and Policy is a new position and Dr. Turbeville will have responsibility for overseeing a Medical Affairs Team that will work with the CIRM team, the Accessibility and Affordability Working Group and the board to develop healthcare policy, reimbursement strategy, post-market activities and research. He will also oversee and develop CIRM's infrastructure programs for clinical trials and the delivery of therapies, in particular the Alpha Clinics Network and the future Community Care Centers of Excellence.

"As CIRM drives more transformative regenerative therapies to the clinics, we set a bold strategic goal to deliver a roadmap for access and affordability of these treatments to all patient communities. We are extremely excited to have Sean as a qualified leader and expert in the field to lead this charge," says Maria Millan, CIRM's President and CEO. "He has been a mission-driven patient advocate and board member of the Cholangiocarcinoma Foundation which he joined after losing his father. In this role, he drove the creation of alliances with companies to increase access to clinical trials for patients with this devastating cancer."

Dr. Turbeville joins the growing ranks of new team members that CIRM has hired since the passage of Proposition 14 in November 2020. CIRM is rebuilding and expanding its team to meet new challenges and advance the mission of the agency.

Among the new hires is **Linda Nevin, PhD**, who joined us as a Senior Science Officer on the Review and Portfolio Development Team. Linda is a former Associate Editor for the journal *PLOS Medicine* and brings detailed experience with data sharing, health equity research, large cohort studies, and machine learning in medicine. Linda got her PhD in Neuroscience from UCSF and has a BS/MS in Biological Sciences from Stanford.

Katie Sharify is the new Communications Team Coordinator, but she has a long history of involvement with CIRM. More than ten years ago Katie was a patient in the first clinical trial CIRM funded, a stem cell therapy aimed at helping people with spinal cord injuries. Since then, Katie has been a tireless supporter and advocate on behalf of CIRM, so we were delighted to be able to make her a full-time member of the team.

Maziar Shah Mohammed, PhD, a Senior Science Officer in our Scientific Programs group, has undergraduate and master's degrees in Materials Science and Engineering and he got his PhD in Biomaterials and Tissue Engineering from McGill University in Canada. He comes to CIRM with experience in academic research, the medical device industry and, most recently as a Lead Reviewer at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the Center for Devices and Radiological Health (CDRH).

Lisa McGinley, PhD, joined CIRM as a Senior Science Officer in Therapeutics and Development. She has expertise in stem cell therapy discovery, development and translation in cardiovascular and neurology spaces. She received her PhD in Regenerative Medicine from the National University of Ireland, Galway and completed her postdoctoral fellowship in Bioengineering at the Georgia Institute of Technology. Most recently she was an Assistant Professor in Neurology at the University of Michigan, where she led an NIH-funded collaborative stem cell initiative developing therapeutics for ALS and Alzheimer's disease.

Treecy Truc Nguyen is CIRM's new Project Manager in the Therapeutics Development group. Treecy got her BSHS and MPH from Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. Before joining CIRM she was the Senior Systems Manager at The Unity Council, a non-profit community development organization committed to social equality and improving the quality of life in traditionally underserved communities.

The new team members are:

- **Claudette Mandac**
Project Manager, Review
- **Mitra Hooshmand**
SSO, Special Projects and Strategic Initiatives
- **Vanessa Singh**
HR Manager
- **Pounesh Simpson**
Director of Finance
- **Alexandra Caraballo**
Grants Management Specialist
- **Kevin Marks**
General Counsel
- **Michael Bunch**
Business Services Officer
- **Rosa Canet-Aviles**
Vice President, Science
- **Uta Grieshammer**
SSO, Science
- **Linda Nevin**
SSO, Review and Portfolio
- **Stephanie Bautista**
Executive Assistant to the President
- **Mason Saia**
Software Engineer
- **Marianne Villablanca**
Associate Director, Board Relations
- **Katie Sharify**
Communications Team Coordinator
- **Lisa McGinley**
SSO, Therapeutics
- **Esteban Cortez**
Director, Marketing and Communications
- **Maziar Shah Mohammadi**
SSO, Scientific Programs
- **Treecy Truc Nguyen**
Project Manager, Therapeutics
- **Sean Turbeville**
Vice President, Medical Affairs & Policy

At CIRM, we never forget that we were created by the people of California to accelerate stem cell treatments to patients with unmet medical needs, and act with a sense of urgency to succeed in that mission.

To meet this challenge, our team of highly trained and experienced professionals actively partners with both academia and industry in a hands-on, entrepreneurial environment to fast track the development of today's most promising stem cell technologies.

With \$5.5 billion in funding and more than 150 active stem cell programs in our portfolio, CIRM is the world's largest institution dedicated to helping people by bringing the future of cellular medicine closer to reality.

For more information go to www.cirm.ca.gov

Source URL: <https://www.cirm.ca.gov/about-cirm/newsroom/press-releases/03072022/stem-cell-agency-hires-new-vice-president-medical>